



Research

FCC Regulatory Reform on Tap

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Congress looks to add to its growing portfolio of regulatory reform legislation. This week Congress targets the Federal Communications Commission. A set of companion bills authored by Representative Greg Walden (R-OR) and Senator Dean Heller (R-NV) will place tighter standards and demand more transparency in FCC's rulemaking process.

Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle are focused on reforming arguably one of the more powerful independent agencies. FCC has already been a target of congressional oversight. Last week, the Senate [voted 52-46](#) to effectively uphold FCC's recent net neutrality rules. The new rules – scheduled to go into effect [next week](#) – create an unprecedented regulatory mandate and more than 47,000 paperwork burden hours.

Much of the criticism levied at FCC over this and other rulemakings centers upon a lack of transparency, certainty, and responsiveness. This legislative package ([H.R. 3309](#), [H.R. 3310](#), [S. 1784](#), and [S. 1780](#)) seeks to remedy those concerns. Some of the more notable provisions include:

- Requiring FCC to more heavily weigh the quantifiable economic impact of its rules;
- Establishing firm “shot clocks” to provide stakeholders with a clearer schedule of implementation;
- Revising and consolidating how FCC reports its procedures and findings to both Congress and the public.

Representative Walden will take the lead this week as the House bills face a markup session on November 16 in the Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Communications and Technology, which Representative Walden chairs. If the votes on net neutrality are any guide, the legislation has a promising future in the [House](#). The Senate versions face a less clear, more difficult path.